

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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FROM: C G MACCABE
POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIVISION
7 January 1994

S U M M A R Y

1. The past three months have seen Ireland at a level rarely surpassed since the Shankill bombing, the Greyhound contacts with Sinn Féin/PIRA and the Declaration have been the major events of the period. This period has also been notable for the Gerry Adams and Sinn Féin, such claims to be central to the resolution of the political problems facing Northern Ireland. Only after the Declaration has the focus become the Antrim Round continued, accorded to it by the DUP, in part. The Irish Government continued to process, and late in October the principles to underpin this process ensure that the two Governments will have ownership of political development, and that the responsible for setting the agenda. 19 November leaked the Irish Government document for political and constitutional development. This was quickly disowned by the Irish, but nothing further has emerged in its place. The DUP's 'blueprint for Northern Ireland' Minister by Mr. Molyneux, but has attracted little interest.

- cc PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B
- PS/Michael Ancram (DENI, B&L) - B
- PS/Mr Smith (DED, DOE&L) - B
- PS/Lord Arran (DHSS, DANI&L) - B
- PS/Lady Mayhew - B
- PS/PUS (B&L) - B
- PS/Mr Fell - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Legge - B
- NI Perm Secs - B
- Mr Williams - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Steele - B
- Mr Lyon - B
- Mr Shannon - B
- Mr Blackwell - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Hamilton, DOE - B
- Mr Wood (B&L) - B
- Mr Rickard - B
- Mr McCusker - B
- Mr Canavan - B
- Mr Brooker - B
- Mrs Collins - B
- Mr Daniell - B
- Mr Dodds - B
- Mr Cornick - B
- Mr Marsh - B
- Mr Quinn - B
- Mr Leach - B
- Mr Kyle - B
- Mr Caine - B
- Mr Archer, RID - B
- HMA Dublin - B
- Mr Sibson, Cabinet Office - B
- CIVAD, HQNI - B

Handwritten notes:
 Cut → done
 → Mr.
 Mrs. Rogers

PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND: OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 1993

I attach the latest summary of political developments in Northern Ireland.

[signed CGM]

C G MACCABE
SH EXT 27085

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POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND: OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 1993

A SUMMARY

1. The past three months have seen media interest in Northern Ireland at a level rarely surpassed in the last 25 years. The Shankill bombing, the Greysteel massacre, the disclosure of HMG's contacts with Sinn Fein/PIRA and the signing of the Joint Declaration have been the major events attracting attention. The period has also been notable for the amount of attention lavished on Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein, much of which has given credence to their claims to be central to the resolution of the political problems facing Northern Ireland. Only after the signing of the Joint Declaration has the focus become a more critical one.

2. The Ancram Round continued, with greater prominence being accorded to it by the UUP, in particular, at the end of the period. The Irish Government continued to show enthusiasm for the peace process, and late in October the Tanaiste listed six democratic principles to underpin this process. But pains were also taken to ensure that the two Governments were seen to have ownership of political development, and that the Hume/Adams dialogue was not responsible for setting the agenda. The 'Irish Press' on 19 November leaked the Irish Government's version of a framework document for political and constitutional development. This was quickly disowned by the Irish, but the embarrassment caused meant nothing further has emerged in its place. The UUP's 'Blueprint for Stability' was passed to the Prime Minister by Mr Molyneaux, but has yet to be published. The DUP's 'Breaking the Logjam' was published but attracted little interest.

B JOINT DECLARATION

3. After months of intense political activity involving the two Governments, the Joint Declaration was made on 15 December by the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach. The Declaration contained a balanced statement of political realities and constitutional principles, reiterating the constitutional guarantee on the future

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of Northern Ireland, but also stating HMG's willingness to implement a United Ireland should the majority in Northern Ireland wish it. It laid down a challenge to the Republican movement (and Loyalist Paramilitaries) to end their campaign of violence.

Reaction

4. Reaction generally has been quite positive, with acceptance of the Declaration by the SDLP, Alliance Party and (with qualifications) the UUP. The DUP have been predictably hostile and have indicated their intention to campaign against the Declaration. Where it is not actively opposed to the Declaration, grassroots Unionist opinion remains somewhat sceptical and may await the response of the Republican movement before settling. The DUP will be seeking to take advantage of such doubts, to promote their image as the party representing the true voice of Ulster Unionism. A hard-hitting struggle between the two Unionist Parties is in prospect, with June's European Elections providing the next opportunity for opinion to be tested. For the UUP, leading figures will also have half an eye on the leadership - with John Taylor having improved his position in the past three months to become favourite. Sinn Fein/PIRA have yet to respond substantively. Responses from leading Sinn Fein figures have appeared confused, and efforts have also been made to divert attention from the main issue by raising amnesties and other matters. Indications now are that they are unlikely to end their campaign of terrorism as a result of the Declaration, although outright rejection also seems unlikely. Loyalist paramilitaries have also yet to make a substantive response, and are likely to wait and see which way the Republican movement jump before so doing. Church Leaders have united in support of the Declaration and in calling for an end to violence on all sides as a consequence. International reaction has also been very positive.

C CONTACTS WITH PIRA

5. The 'Observer' article on 28 November giving details on HMG's contacts with PIRA, and the subsequent statement of verification by

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the Secretary of State, caused a furore, particularly in Unionist circles. The credibility of HMG was undoubtedly damaged both by the disclosure itself and because PIRA appeared to edge ahead in the propaganda battle which accompanied it; while the fact that such contacts had hitherto been publicly denied led many to question the personal probity of the Secretary of State. Unionists felt betrayed, and fears about what the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach might agree in their joint initiative were exacerbated. Subsequent events have soothed those fears somewhat and removed the issue from the limelight, but an underlying uneasiness remains.

D THE PARTIES AND PARTY CONFERENCES

6. The period saw the annual Party Conferences of the UUP, DUP and SDLP. The UUP Conference, in Craigavon, held in mid-October in the aftermath of Martin Smyth's comments about allowing Sinn Fein to the Conference table, showed that grass-roots Unionist opinion remained sceptical of HMG's intentions and deeply hostile to the Hume/Adams initiative. The UUP's confidence had been given a considerable boost as a result of the closer ties with the Conservative Party developed in the wake of the Maastricht vote, leading Jim Molyneaux to say in his speech that "the future of Ulster is now assured." That confidence has subsequently been tested by Mr Molyneaux's sanctioning of the Joint Declaration, and fears that such a forward position leaves the Party vulnerable to DUP charges of complicity.

7. The DUP Conference, held in late November, was a predictable occasion with much venom and vitriol deployed liberally against all-comers. The Party's desire to ensure that Dr Paisley once again tops the poll in the European Elections in June means there is unlikely to be any let-up now, particular as even relatively moderate members of the DUP are genuinely horrified by the Joint Declaration. Several meetings with the Prime Minister have done little to allay their concerns.

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8. The SDLP Conference, held the same weekend as the DUP's, confirmed John Hume's standing within the Party, and demonstrated the desire for peace and the belief that Mr Hume had advanced that objective. Doubters within the SDLP appeared won over by Mr Hume's speech, and there has been little subsequent criticism of his decision to renew dialogue with Gerry Adams following the Joint Declaration. His support for the Declaration further removes room for manoeuvre from Sinn Fein.

E POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

9. There were a number of bilateral meetings between the parties and Michael Ancram. These were generally positive, and included one with the DUP. There remains no immediate prospect of round table talks, although the UUP and Alliance Party are pressing for the political development process to be pursued with greater urgency. This could serve to heighten the pressure on Sinn Fein. The DUP are unlikely to play a constructive role in the talks despite seeking, and receiving, assurances from the Prime Minister that the basis for such talks (Peter Brooke's statement of 26 March 1991) remained unchanged as a result of the Joint Declaration. The SDLP's approach is less easy to determine. John Hume appeared to lose interest in political development in 1993, and may still be preoccupied by attempts to end PIRA violence. Others in his Party are, however, keen to see talks restarted, both to move Sinn Fein out of the limelight and to demonstrate the SDLP's role as the leading representatives of Nationalism in Northern Ireland. All parties may also see advantage in showing that constitutional politicians have a significant role to play in determining the future governance of Northern Ireland, thereby increasing the pressure on those unwilling to enter constitutional politics.

F LOCAL GOVERNMENT

10. The local government scene has been relatively quiet. Attempts by Wilbert Magill, DUP Mayor of Ards, to arrange a meeting of all 26 Council Chairmen/Mayors with the Prime Minister on

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security matters continued. In Belfast, despite a show of opposition by the DUP and Sinn Fein, there was narrow approval for continuation of the Laganside concert hall project.

- 7 October: John Hume briefed the Taoiseach and Tanaiste on the agreement he had reached with Gerry Adams.
- 11 October: Rev Martin Smyth said that Sinn Fein could have a seat at the Conference table after a period provided the IRA had declared a permanent end to violence.
- 14 October: DUP Conference in Craigavon.
- 18 October: Exclusion order signed preventing Gerry Adams visiting GB.
- 23 October: Shankill Road bombing.
- 27 October: Gerry Adams acted as a pallbearer at Thomas Begley's funeral.
- 29 October: The Prime Minister and Taoiseach issued a joint statement in Brussels agreeing any initiative could only be taken by the two Governments and that there was no question of the two Governments endorsing the Hume/Adams agreement.
- 30 October: Greyhound massacre.
- 10 November: President Clinton refused a visa for Gerry Adams to enter the US because of his involvement in terrorist activity.
- 21 November: The DUP publicly launched their "Breaking the logjam" document (already handed to the Prime Minister).

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DIARY OF EVENTS

- 5 October: 25th Anniversary of Civil Rights march in Derry.
- 7 October: John Hume briefed the Taoiseach and Tanaiste on the agreement he had reached with Gerry Adams.
- 11 October: Rev Martin Smyth said that Sinn Fein could have a seat at the Conference table after a period provided the IRA had declared a permanent end to violence.
- 16 October: UUP Conference in Craigavon.
- 19 October: Exclusion order signed preventing Gerry Adams visiting GB.
- 23 October: Shankill Road bombing.
- 27 October: Gerry Adams acted as a pallbearer at Thomas Begley's funeral.
- 29 October: The Prime Minister and Taoiseach issued a joint statement in Brussels agreeing any initiative could only be taken by the two Governments and that there was no question of the two Governments endorsing the Hume/Adams agreement.
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- 15 November: The Prime Minister, in a speech at the Guildhall, set out the conditions for Sinn Fein's entry to the political arena.
- 18 November: Trades Union organised peace rallies across Northern Ireland.
- 19 November: 'Irish Press' leaked the Irish Government Draft framework document, later disowned by the Taoiseach.
- 26-28 November: SDLP Conference in Cookstown.
- 27 November: DUP Conference at La Mon House Hotel.
- 28 November: 'Observer' printed claims of HMG contacts with PIRA.
- 29 November: Secretary of State's statement to House of Commons about contacts.
- 1 December: Secretary of State wrote to the Leader of the Opposition correcting transcription errors.
- 10 December: John Smith visited Northern Ireland.
- 15 December: The Prime Minister and Taoiseach agreed the Joint Declaration.
- 16 December: Announcement of Select Committee on Northern Ireland.
- 22 December: Prime Ministerial visit to Northern Ireland.
- 23 December: Letter from Secretary of State to Party Leaders inviting them to a further series of meetings with Michael Ancram on political development in the New Year.

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